

**In attendance:** Ross Austin, Lewis; Jim Singleton and Shannon Burns, Jefferson; Anita McIntosh, Mason; Mary Reed, Pierce; Jennifer Brewer, Skamania; John Deremiah, Island; Mary Margolis and Brooke Carnahan, Clallam; Elizabeth Jobson and Nels Nelson, Clark; Hulet Gates, King; Mike Canfield, Kitsap; Craig Bracy, Cowlitz; Joe Hauth, WSIPP; Chris Hayes, ART QA/Snohomish; Doug Kopp, JRA Olympia.

## **1. Introduction/Status of Programs**

All but two counties have started groups. Issues facilitators identified were: problems with risk assessment identifying enough eligible youth for ART in small counties; small # of youth (2-3) in a group; attendance problems; reluctance of youth to do role plays; completing homework; moral reasoning segments geared to institution and focusing on 'telling on someone,' lack of PO/dept understanding about ART; transportation.

## **2. Discussion of Initial Engagement of ART youth and families**

### **Brainstorm of Approaches**

Most counties *meet with youth* separately at least a week prior to 'sell' groups; approach with youth emphasized positives, highlighting that group would be fun, be different than other groups, etc. Sanctions for non-attendance were mentioned but not the highlight. Initial meeting established a familiar face for the youth. Where incentive programs were established, rewards for youth participation were highlighted. Initial meetings with youth were anywhere from 15 minutes to an hour, depending on the youth's needs.

*Role of Probation* varied, but generally at sites where probation had an informed active role (or where POs and facilitators were one in the same) and where juvenile justice players were on 'the same page,' issues around sanctions, incentives and reinforcers were clearer and proactive, leading to stronger ART groups. In some cases the POs were the ones informing youth they were to go to ART; in those cases that POs weren't educated about ART, attendance and youth performance suffered. Likely, the POs emphasized the sanctions if a youth didn't attend (vs. the incentives), with the result of creating resistance. In some cases, the PO simply gave the youth bad info that the ART facilitator would have to spend time correcting later on. Generally, sites where POs/ART/Supervisors were all working in concert to make ART work, attendance and youth behavior were better. Clarity of roles and continuous communication appear to lead to more effective ART classes. Sites where ART facilitators 'stand alone' appear to have a disadvantage when working with youth.

*Role of Families* also varied, but overall sites where families were also 'sold' on ART lead to parents (etc.) supporting the intervention, attendance and information youth learned in group. The investment in time up front lead to less issues later on. Most counties met 1:1 or gathered parents into a group to discuss ART. Parents had logistical questions, and it was more effective when ART facilitators had answers. One county is doing a parent meeting in week 5 of ART.

Some counties established *behavior contracts* with youth. Flexibility around sanctions and attendance seems to work better than 'black and white' mandates about rules. Each youth is different; each youth is motivated in different ways. That said, up front expectations and education of youth that is formed into a written signed (by PO, family, youth and ART facilitator) contract reinforces the importance of ART and the expectations of facilitators.

### **3. Incentives**

Incentives (along with up front education of families and POs/facilitators working in concert) generally provide structures to keep youth motivated, involved and active. Establishing incentives up front is more effective than establishing them in the course of an intervention. A mix of short-term, long-term, group, individual and random incentives creates higher motivation. Chris shared four tactical approaches for reinforcement:

- If everyone in group does X, then everyone in group receives reward
- Each person in the group who does X gets a reward
- If everybody in the group does X, then one person gets the reward
- If one person in the group does X, then the group gets the reward

#### ***Incentives courts are using include:***

- If youth completes 10 weeks, then community service, VCF and fines are wiped out.
- Youth receives week for week decrease in supervision time for each week attends group.
- Pro-rating community service per group (call Shannon in Jefferson for details)
- Token economy for portions of ART work completed (e.g. receive a point for homework completed). Youth then negotiate on what reward they receive for points earned.
- One free 'minor' PV for positive ART performance.
- McDonald certificates for positive performance.
- Soliciting local business for donated rewards for positive performance.
- Pop and food during and after group for positive performance

### **4. Attendance**

Better attendance happens with incentive programs, family outreach, youth education, facilitators having positive and enthusiastic stances and strong PO/facilitator communication. Counties worried about youth who were too far away from group site having continuous good attendance. Generally, flexibility around sanctions for poor attendance gives facilitators ability to work with each youth's particular needs and issues. Other tactics counties are doing to impact attendance include:

- Picking up youth
- Creating attendance contacts listing group schedule, incentives, sanctions that may take place, phone in prior to missing group and outlining how youth will have to make up groups.

- Noting to parents that if youth misses group, they'll serve detention time that the parent will have to contribute payment toward.
- PV filed immediately and youth being in court within 24 hours if group is missed.
- If youth calls in sick, community monitor checks on youth or facilitator calls to check on youth.

## **5. Transportation**

Tactics counties are using include:

- Arranging group time around bus schedules
- Selling parents on transporting their own kids.
- Establishing volunteer, mentor, intern to transport
- Reimburse parents for mileage when they provide transport
- Giving bus tickets to youth
- POs transport youth to fulfill POs contact standards for their probationers.